1: Freeman E-5 (1949-1951)1955 OC6 Iban OC6

311 areas where it has all been felled, the inhabitants find themselves in something of a plight, and long journeys have to be made to secure essential materials. 324 Again, proximity to *kampong* ensures good and varied supplies of food—relishes 226 to enliven the monotony of rice—for in the rain forest there are many opportunities for the hunter, and the streams are well stocked with fish.

The Krukoh Method

243 268. In the ordinary course of events the magico-religious rites that precede the felling of virgin jungle are performed in May or early June, and thereafter the cycle of cultivation follows the course already described. By the time reaping is completed, in the following March or April, regeneration of the forest has begun—young plants are springing up amid the *padi* stubble (*ierami*), and in the places least affected by the burn there is vigorous coppice growth. By July, a dense, though still diminutive scrub has established itself, and the farm has reached the *krukoh* stage.

269. When pioneering virgin territory it is normal Iban practice to slash this *krukoh* scrub in late July or early August, and after it has been fired, to sow the land once more with *padi*—that is, for a second year in succession. To farm in this way is to *ngrukoh*, or to *bekrukoh*, and for the Iban it is the generally accepted mode of procedure when virgin jungle is being worked. In all the pioneer areas visited by me, *krukoh* farming was an established practice. The Iban themselves look upon it as completely normal, legitimate and economic; and from their testimony (I discussed this matter with scores of different informants), it is clear that *krukoh* farming has been a customary method of land usage for very many years. We need not be surprised at this state of affairs, for the practice of taking 171 two or three consecutive crops from forest land has been reported from many other parts of South-East Asia.[1] Indeed it seems to be the prevalent system among shifting cultivators who have ample reserves of forest land at their disposal.

270. Among the Iban it does sometimes happen that the whole of a *kampong* farm is cultivated for two years in succession, but the much more common system is to re-plant only about one-half to two-thirds of the old farm, and to make up the desired acreage by felling a further area of virgin forest. All of the *bilek* families whose farms contained a substantial proportion of virgin jungle in 1949-50, adopted this method. Iban social organization being what it is, there are in this system of gradual advance certain definite advantages. The *bilek* family, which is the basic unit in Iban agriculture, is restricted in numbers, and many *bilek* families have only one male in their labour team. This means that for many families the task of felling three or four acres of virgin jungle is a formidable one, and difficult to maintain year after year. If, however, an initial area of say three acres is felled, and about half of it cultivated for two years in succession, then the family concerned has only to clear one to two acres of new jungle to bring its farm up to the required size By adopting this method a *bilek* family is able to farm well within its labour resources, and—at the same time—steadily to increase its land holdings.

243 271. A further advantage of this twofold system (from the Iban point of view) 133 is that it lessens the chance of adverse weather interfering with the all-important

[1] For example, the cultivation of hill *padi* for two or more consecutive years has been reported in Malaya ("Padi Planting Methods in Malaya," M. A. J., Vol. 27, 1939, p. 58), in Sumatra (Danhof, 1940, p. 39; in the Philippines (Copeland, 1924, p. 22) and in Southern India (Ramiah, 1937, p. 17 and Furer-Haimendorf, 1945, p. 78 seq.).

2: Howell M-5 (ca. 1908) 1908-1910
OC6 Iban OC6

No. VI.—The Dyak Feast called "Mandi Rumah."

By the Revd. Wm. Howell.

342 When a new house has been taken possession of by it's future inmates, certain ceremonies must be gone through to make it habitable, such as the rite making it lawful for the house to receive food for it's inhabitants. But the rite of *mandi rumah* (house washing) may be deferred, although the house must be under certain restrictions until it has been performed.

342 783 *Mandi rumah* literally translated is 'to bathe the house.' Yet the term is more common than the more exact phrase *masu rumah* 'to wash the house.' *Muai rumah* (lit. to abolish the house) is also used as the name of this feast, having reference to the abolishing of restrictions by it's observance.

It is hard to say what was the original significance of this observance, for nothing but the name implies anything about washing, the ceremony as now performed having nothing to suggest it. Perhaps, however, there is a hint of the original idea remaining in the restriction that prevents anyone polluting the water of the bathing and watering place, by fishing with the aid of *tuba* (poisonous roots) which is thrown into the water to stupify the fish or kill them, before the *masu rumah*. [224]

Again, if, as the name implies, a cleansing of the house is meant it is difficult to divine it's purpose. The washing of an old house might signify the purging of some stain of guilt attaching to it or it's inmates, but in the case of a new house it seems to imply a sort of consecration to good purposes, and the formal renunciation of all that is accounted by Dyak custom immoral.

342 It's actual present significance to the Dyak does not seem to go beyond the observance of a custom made binding by tradition, and made desirable enough by the irksomeness of restrictions that tradition also enjoins until the *mandi rumah* has been duly observed. And these restrictions are irksome enough.

[P. 19]

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6

224 the pigs, in hurrying down the declivity, often receive them in the breast, and being thus staked, soon bleed to death, and are discovered by the Dyaks. The smaller kinds of game, such as porcupines, palandok, or mouse-deer, small pigs, pheasants, and partridges, are caught in springes, and by those alone a clever woodsman can daily supply his family with this kind of food in abundance, the cord made use of for the [283] springes is of their own manufacture, very fine and strong; it is made from the inner bark of several kinds of trees. They have also cage-traps, into which the squirrels and mouse-deer are attracted by choice food, and which fall upon and detain them. Pigeons 223 and other birds are caught with springes and bird-lime placed in the trees which they frequent for food, particularly the different species of 'kayu ara' (Ficus), which are very abundant, and on which the many species of these birds delight to feed.

278 A practice of fishing, used by the Dyaks of all de-226 scriptions, and which has been observed also of the 824 natives of South America, with whom these people have many things in common, deserves particular notice. It is called fishing with tuba, and is thus carried on: large quantities of the tuba being collected, which is the root of a climbing plant (Menispermum), though the same effect is produced by the fruit of a tree grown extensively for that purpose. The tribe intending to fish proceed in their boats to the mouth of a small river, or creek, which has a bar

3: Low G-5 (1844-1847) 1848
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of sand at its entrance, so that, at low water, it has little or no communication with the sea; and having distributed the bundles of tuba in equal proportions to all the boats present, the persons in them proceed to beat up the roots on the thwarts of the canoes, frequently pouring water on them, until the whole of the narcotic principle is extracted and collected in the bottom of the boat, in the water which, during the process of beating, has been poured over the roots, and which has now become of a white milky colour. At low water, and at a signal given by the chief, all the boats simultaneously commence baling out the water charged with the narcotic into the river, and this, spreading through the waters in every way, stupefies the fish. The smaller ones, being most readily affected, first float upon the surface, and are taken with the light and sharp-pointed spears of the Dyaks. Soon the larger ones, beginning to feel its influence, also come to the top; then it is that the best of the sport commences: fishes of the largest size, together with small alligators, appear for an instant struggling to free themselves from the lethargy occasioned by the infected waters. The Dyaks, who are ever on the alert, paddle instantly towards them, and three or four of the barbed spears are immediately thrust into their scaly bodies by the different boats, which arrive together at the scene of their struggles: occasionally a large fish, in his dying agony, is too powerful for his assailants, one or two of whom

3: Low G-5 (1844 1847) 1848
OC6 Iban OC6

278 are sometimes dragged into the water, where, if the
●226 place be shallow, they dispatch their prey with their
824 parangs or knives. Many other ludicrous accidents occur, which, when large crowds are assembled (as is the case when the tuba is collected at the expense of and for the amusement of the Europeans, and on which occasions the whole country is invited to be present, and those who wish to share in the sport), afford merriment to those who are merely spectators. From the first appearance of the fish the sport lasts about two hours, when the influx of water from the rising tide dissipates the narcotic, and such fish as remain recover from its effects. Other kinds of fishing are not much practised by the Dyaks, who trust almost solely to the Malays for their supply.

5: Roth E-4 (no date) 1892 OC6 Iban OC6

for ear pendants; the helmet of the *galeatus* is used for a sword-buckle.

6. *Fishing.*

The Dyaks are expert anglers, and fishing is with them a favourite occupation. They commence fishing at a very early age, and the habit grows upon them rather than otherwise. They are fond of the water and both swim and dive well. They swim hand over hand like dogs. They never take a header in diving but jump into the water upright, sinking feet first.

Diving for Fish.—They often catch the fish in the upper waters by diving into the rocky pools and pulling them out of the holes and crevices. The *sema* especially are caught in this way.

Curing.—The women cure the fish. They either dry it in the smoke of a wood fire, or cut it up and boil it in brine and so preserve and pickle it, making *makasam ikan*.

Scoop net.—The scoop net is used chiefly by the women who are fond of wading up the shallows, net in hand and basket *suitong*, slung from the shoulder, scooping up the prawns and periwinkles, &c., that come in their way. Sometimes they drop the fish into a hollow gourd which they carry.

Casting net.—The *jala* or casting net in ordinary use is made of *tengang* string dyed claret colour, with *samak* to preserve it, and is weighted with stones if nothing better is to be obtained.

Angling.—They fully understand the use of a bait and invariably bait their hooks. Fish lines are made of the *apieng* palm.

The *Fish-spears* in use are the *penawan* and *serampang*; the penawan is simply a barbed spear with a slender iron fore-shaft; the serampang is a forked spear furnished with a long bamboo shaft, and with either two or three metal prongs.

The *Fish-traps* in every-day use are the *bubu* and *abau*. They are both of stiff basket work and resemble an acorn in shape; the only difference between them is that of size; the latter being infinitely the larger. The traps are made of the ribs of the apieng palm.

Fishing by torchlight.—Another mode of fishing is to creep along the bank in a canoe after dark with a torch in one hand and a fish spear in the other, to stick the mudfish as they rise to the surface confused by the light. Prawns are also caught in this fashion but with a hand net.

5: Roth E-4 (no date) 1892 OC6 Iban OC6

Tubai fishing.—But the favourite form of fishing whether on a large or on a small scale is with the *tubai* root (*menispernum*) the juice of which is baled into the stream to poison its waters and to cause the fish to rise stupefied to the surface. The *empang*, or basket work screens, are first erected at the mouth of the river to prevent the escape of the fish into pure water. Each person brings his own *tubai*—a bundle or two. A *karangan* is selected where suitable stones abound. It must be two or three hours' pull from the entrance or the sport would be over too soon. The canoes line either bank, and at a given signal the entire *bala*, *i.e.*, party, commence to hammer out the root and soak it in the water in the bottom of their boats. A few minutes later when all hands are ready the poisoned liquid is baled out into the stream, and the canoes after a short pause begin to drift slowly down the current, and as the fish rise to the surface, they are speared with fish-fork or captured with hand-nets. The best of the fun is over in an hour or two, but many remain, nevertheless, until late in the evening to watch for a fresh rise. The women join in the sport and scoop up the small fry with their nets. It is forbidden by custom to hurl the spear at the fish; any accident arising from an infraction of this rule is punishable by fine.

7. *Navigation.*

The canoes are hollowed out of a single log by means of fire and the use of the adze. The natives have no measure to ensure accuracy, but are entirely guided by the eye. Generally the canoe shows traces of the fire and water treatment it has received, the inner surface being soft and full of superficial cracks, while the outer surface is hard and close. When the shell has been sufficiently opened out, thwarts are inserted to prevent its shrinking as the wood dries. Planks or gunwales are stitched on to the sides to increase its volume, the seams being caulked with sago stems which are light and porous, and swell when wet and so keep out the water. Each of these side pieces is formed of an entire plank about 12 inches deep and about 1½ inches thick, laced on to the body of the canoe by flaxen cords and united to its opposite plank by the thwarts. The largest canoes have the sides made still higher by means of a narrow plank laced on to the first gunwale, and the seam again caulked. The canoe is alike at both ends, the stem and stern being both pointed, curved, and rising out of the water. There is no keel, and the canoe draws little water. There are no ribs nor is there any figure head.

To make a bark canoe the native simply goes to the nearest

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

224 birds and wild animals. One of these traps (*peti*) set for killing wild pig is a dangerous contrivance by which many Dyaks have lost their lives. It consists of a spring formed by a stick being tied to the end of a post and pulled apart from it. The end of this stick is armed with a sharp bamboo spear. I have known of several men being killed by this trap, and in Sarawak this particular trap is forbidden by the Government to be set.

225 227 The Sea Dyaks are very expert with the rod and line, and with them fishing is a favourite occupation. They begin fishing at an early age. For bait they use worms or certain berries. Their hooks are made of brass wire.

Another method of fishing is by wooden floats (*pelampong*), generally cut in the form of a duck. Each has a baited hook fastened to it, and is set swimming down the stream. The owner of these floats drifts slowly in his canoe after them, watching, till the peculiar motions of any of these ducks shows that a fish has been hooked.

The *achar* is a spoon-bait. A piece of mother-of-pearl shell or some white metal is cut in the form of a triangle. At the apex the line is attached, and at the base are fastened two or three hooks by a couple of inches of line. This appliance is generally used with a rod from the bows, and another man in the stern paddles the boat along.

The Dyaks also have many varieties of fish-traps, which they set in the streams and rivers. Most of these are made of split bamboo.

They also have nets of various kinds; the most popular is the *jala*, or circular casting-net, loaded with leaden or iron weights in the circumference, and with a spread sometimes of twenty feet. Great skill is shown by the 226 Dyak in throwing this net over a shoal of fish which he has sighted. He casts the net in such a manner that all

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

the outer edge touches the water almost simultaneously. The weights cause it to sink and close together, encompassing the fish, and the net is drawn up by a rope attached to its centre, the other end of which is tied to the fisherman's left wrist. The thrower of this net often stands on the bow of a small canoe, and shows great skill in balancing himself. The *jala* is used both in fresh and salt water, and can be thrown either from the bank of a river or by a man wading into the sea.

But the most favourite mode of fishing among the Dyaks is with the *tuba* root (*Cocculus indicus*). Sometimes this is done on a small scale in some little stream. Sometimes, however, the people of several Dyak houses arrange to have a *tuba*-fishing. The men, women, and children of these houses, accompanied by their friends, go to some river which has been previously decided upon. A fence made by planting stakes closely together is erected from bank to bank. In the middle of this there is an opening leading into a square enclosure made in the same fashion, into which the fish enter when trying to escape from the *tuba* into fresh water. The canoes then proceed several hours' journey up the river, until they get to some place decided on beforehand. Here they stop for the night in small booths erected on the banks of the river. The small boats are cleared of everything in them so as to be ready for use the next day.

All the people bring with them fishing-spears and hand-nets. The spears are of various kinds—some have only one barbed point, while others have two or three. The shaft of the spear is made of a straight piece of bamboo about six feet long. The spear is so made that, when a fish is speared the head of the weapon comes out of the socket in the bamboo; but as it is tied on to the shaft,

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

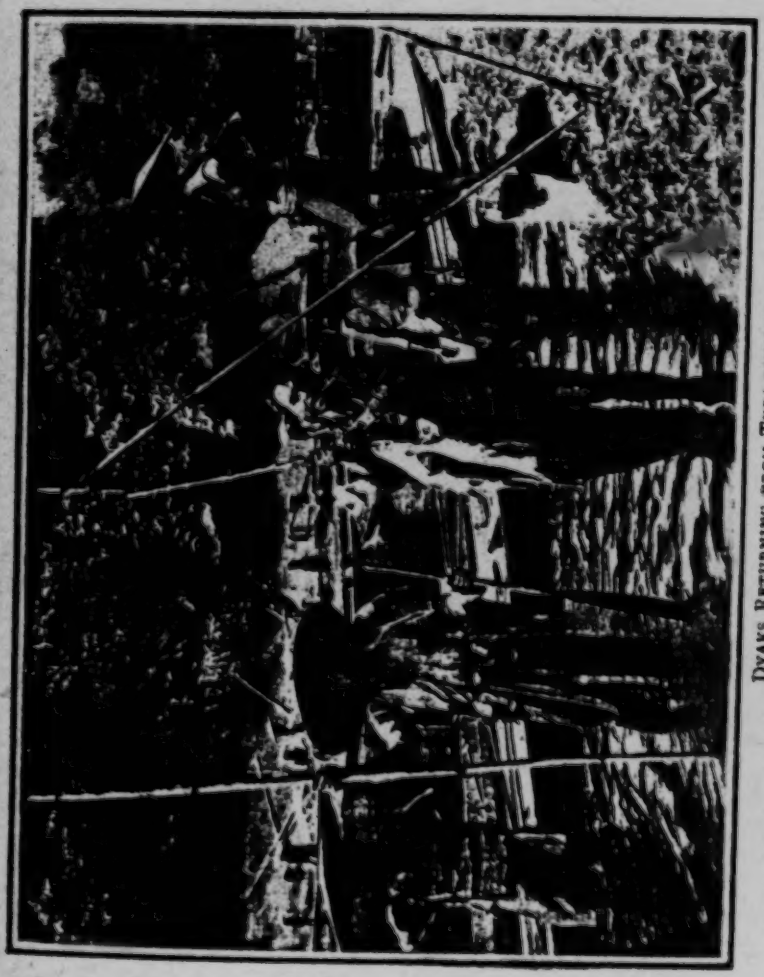
it is impossible for the fish to escape. Even when the fisherman throws his spear at the fish, there is little chance of the fish escaping, because the bamboo bears it to the surface, and it is easy for the men to pick up the bamboo shaft and thus secure the fish.

Most of the people bring with them some *tuba* root, made up into small close bundles, the thickness of a man's wrist, and about six inches long. Early the next morning some of the canoes are filled with water, and the root is beaten and dipped into it. For an hour or so fifty or more clubs beat a lively tattoo on the root bundles, as they are held to the sides of the boats. The *tuba* is dipped into the water in the boat, and wrung out from time to time. This gives the water a white, frothy appearance like soap-suds. The Dyaks, armed with fish-spears and hand-nets, wait in readiness in their canoes. At a given signal the poisoned liquid is baled out into the stream, and the canoes, after a short pause, begin to drift slowly down the current. The fish are stupefied by the *tuba*, and as they rise struggling to the surface, are speared by the Dyaks. The large fish are thus secured amid much excitement, several canoes sometimes making for the same spot where a large fish is seen. The women and children join in the sport, and scoop up the smaller fish with hand-nets. The *tuba* does not affect the flesh of the fish, which can be cooked and eaten.

This form of fishing, when carried out on a large scale, is always a great event among the Dyaks, because besides the large amount of fish secured on these occasions, there is always a great deal of fun and excitement, and it is looked upon as a pleasant sort of picnic.

For superstitious reasons the Dyaks do not interfere with the crocodile until he has shown some sign of his

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6



DYAKS RETURNING FROM TUBA-FISHING

In *tuba* fishing the juice of the *tuba* root is put in the water to poison it, and cause the fish to rise stupefied to the surface, when they are secured either with spears or by hand-nets. In the picture the men are seen taking up to the Dyak house their fish spears and the fish they have succeeded in taking. The boats, which are dug-outs, each made out of the trunk of a tree, are being made fast to the bank. The large hats the men are wearing as a protection from the sun are made of palm leaves. On the right of the picture is seen a three-pronged fish-spear.

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[facing p. 56]

7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

[Facing p. 296]

DYAKS MAKING A DAM FOR TUBA FISHING

The poison from the *tuba* root is put in the water some distance up river, and the Dyaks follow it as it drifts, and spear and net the poisoned fish. The *tuba* does not seem to affect the flesh of the fish, which can be cooked and eaten. Many fish swim down river to escape the poison. These come to this dam, in which there is an opening leading to an enclosure; in this the fish congregate and are afterwards captured.

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7:Gomes M-5 (ca. 1890)1911 OC6 Iban OC6

Dyaks have a great dislike of mentioning the name of anyone who is dead. So when a man dies, it is usual for his namesakes in his village to have new names given them.

It is considered a terrible crime to mention the name of the father-in-law or mother-in-law. Though a Dyak does not speak of his father and mother by name, still if he were asked their names, he would give them. But if a man were asked the name of his father-in-law or mother-in-law, he would not tell it, but ask some other person present to do so.

The Dyaks will eat fruit that has fallen from any tree, but if they find fruit by the path, they will never touch it. The reason for this is given in the Dyak legend, "Danjai and the Were-Tiger's Sister" (p. 265).

I remember once walking with some Dyaks, and a man carrying a load of fruit passed us. Farther on we saw some fruit which had evidently dropped from his load, but none of the Dyaks would eat it.

Circumcision is practised among certain Dyak tribes. It is not a religious ceremony, and is not accompanied with the offering of sacrifices or the singing of incantations. All I have been able to learn from such tribes as practise it, is that it has been the custom from ancient days, and so they do it. The cutting of the foreskin is not done with a knife, but with a piece of sharpened bamboo. The custom is by no means universal among the Sea Dyaks.

When going out fishing or hunting it is considered most unfortunate to mention the name of any fish or bird, or to talk of any animal which it is hoped to secure. One evening I was out shooting wild pig, and was sitting in a dug-out, which was paddled up a stream by three Dyaks.

621 141. A *tangga*, such as this, is the only object which can be properly regarded as belonging
423 to the long-house as a whole. This was a topic which I frequently discussed with the Iban, asking
them if there was any other kind of property which could be regarded as belonging to the long-
house as a whole, and which had resulted from the co-operation of all its members. Always the
356 answer was the same: only the main *tangga* fell into this category, and my own observations
brought me to the same conclusion. After a *tangga* has been erected, its upkeep becomes a general
duty, but within a few years, the rites which accompanied its erection fade in the memory, and
responsibilities are neglected or evaded. At Rumah Nyala, the main *tangga* provided me with an
excellent opportunity to observe Iban responses to corporate obligations. On several occasions it
fell into serious disrepair. The usual trouble was the collapse of the side railings, making the
slippery, notched log that remained, dangerous for young children. A few days after this had
happened, Nyala, the *tuai rumah*, would parade up and down the long-house, announcing the
damage obvious to all, and striving to round up a group of helpers. But his exhortations never met
with any sort of general response; sometimes one or two unoccupied men would offer their assis-
tance, but more often things would drag on for several days, until Nyala himself would gather the
necessary *rotan* lashings, and make good the damage with his own hands.

Co-operation in Economic Affairs.

621 142. The Iban economic system is based on the cultivation of hill *padi*; but here again, there
is never co-operation involving the whole community. Each *bilek-family* is self-sufficient econo-
476 mically, managing its own farm as an independent unit. Between small groups of *bilek-families*—
especially in felling, dibbling, sowing and weeding—co-operation is customary, but rules of exact
reciprocity are very strictly adhered to by all participants. It is, in fact, a system of labour
241 exchange. There is only one phase of the agricultural cycle that is likely to concern the whole
long-house: the firing of the farms. If farms adjoin one another, no one of them may be fired
until a general conference (*baum*) has been held. This is to avert the danger of fire spreading
without warning, and possibly leading to loss of life, or serious ritual offences like the burning of
another family's *batu umai* (*whet-stone*). With this one exception, farms are freely managed as
individual family ventures.

621 143. Hunting and fishing rights, which are very loosely defined, extend over the whole of
the long-house territory, and occasional excursions into the territories of neighbouring communities
476 are not objected to under Iban custom. In small long-houses, large animals, such as deer and pigs,
are usually shared among all *bilek-families*, but here again, the principle is one of reciprocity, and
224 all catches are expected to be shared out in the same way. In larger long-houses, the reciprocal
groups is usually limited to about half-a-dozen neighbouring *bileks* of closely related kin. Brief
226 mention may also be made of *tuba* fishing, which involves the co-operation of a large number of
bilek-families. The method followed is to construct a dam (*impang*) across a slow flowing part of
a river—a task in which all the men join; then all those participating—men, women and children—
[278] foregather at a chosen spot a mile or two upstream, each *bilek-family* bringing a bundle of *tuba*
(Derris alleptica) roots. After the necessary rituals have been performed, the roots are pounded
up, and their poisonous juices gathered in canoes which have been half filled with water. This
done, the milky fluid that results is all at once emptied into the river, and after an interval of
about ten minutes, the whole party paddles off helter-skelter to net and spear the stunned and
poisoned fish. Sometimes the whole community will join in the fishing, but participation is in no
sense obligatory, and on most occasions it is usual to find persons from neighbouring long-houses
also present. Moreover, although all *bilek-families* co-operate in providing the large quantity of
tuba roots that is needed, there is, once the actual fishing begins, completely open and untram-
melled competition. During *tuba* fishing, say the Iban, kinship ties are forgotten. Each *bilek-*
family retains the fish which its members succeed in taking, and there is absolutely no attempt to
divide up the total catch in equal proportions.

621 144. We may say then, that with the not very important exception of the *tangga*, the Iban
long-house community holds no property in common ownership, nor is there any collective owner-
423 ship of land. Again, in the economic sphere there is an absence of any kind of productive activity
by the long-house as a whole.

The Position of Tuai Rumah.

622 145. In every Iban long-house there are two offices of great importance—one secular and the
other ritual. They are the positions of *tuai rumah* and *tuai burong*. In most long-houses they
[551] are held by different individuals, but it is perfectly permissible for one man to hold both offices,
and in some communities this does happen. Neither position is ever held by a woman. (c.f. Foot-
note No. 22). When used as an adjective, the word *tuai* means old, or mature, but as a noun it
refers to any senior and influential member of a community. Here, the emphasis is not primarily
on age, but on the personal qualities of the individual concerned. Thus, a party of young men
[571] setting off on an expedition (*bejalai*), to gather jungle produce, always has its leader, or *tuai*,
though he may be no more than in his early twenties. And in long-house communities, able,
though only middle-aged men often come to exert very considerable authority and influence. In
all contemporary long-houses however, there is one man who holds the title of *tuai rumah*, or
house headman.

146. Since the pacification of the Iban and the establishment of European government, the
position of *tuai rumah* has undergone several important changes. To-day, a *tuai rumah* is looked
upon as an intermediary between his long-house and the administrative system. The Government
accepts him as the representative of his community, and often he is made responsible for the
implementing of its policies. Again, he has been empowered to settle disputes within the juris-
diction of his own long-house. (In the Third Division, "a *tuai rumah* may investigate but shall
not try any case the maximum penalty for which exceeds six *mungkuls* under penalty of a fine
of one pikul all to Government").[31] This means that the ultimate sanction of a *tuai rumah's*

(31) "Sea Dayak (Iban) Fines, Third Division," Kuching, 1960.

136 in Iban augury, though there are few tuai burong (augurs) found in this
[787] District and bird-reading is rapidly disappearing.
[178]

Many of the streams and rivers contain relatively plentiful
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226 supplies of fish, shrimp and snails which constitute the principal source of meat and protein for the Ibans. The presence of several species is dependent upon the conditions of the water, whether high or low, and the techniques for catching the fish are adapted accordingly.

136 According to information supplied by the Sarawak Museum, there are only three species of poisonous snakes among the numerous reptiles
[237] in Sarawak. These are the cobra, krait and adder. Several sub-species of python are found, the most common being the ular sawa (Python) and ular ripong (Python curtus), both of which are highly prized for their meat and the former for its skin which is preserved and sold to shop-
[825] keepers or tourists. Occasionally, bayak (monitor lizards, family Varanidae) are captured by Ibans and Chinese, and either eaten or sold being valued as a source of strength.

B. Economic Bases of Sibu

177 Sibu has been built out of the forests of the Third Division.
439 The town has developed as an entrepot where imported goods have been exchanged for local forest products, the most important of which are jungle produce, rubber, pepper and timber. It is possible to distinguish three periods in the history of Sibu in each of which revenue

243 their food supply. Gathering of jungle produce is still a relatively
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314 important work by which fruits, chicle, fibers and a number of other items are brought to market and sold. The collection of vegetable leaves, shoots and cabbages of a number of different palms provides the principal supplements to the staple of rice. And when rice runs out and there is no money to buy more, the much-disliked scarcity food, sago, can be collected and processed.

226 Fishing is both a leisure activity and a means for catching the most regular and dependable supply of meat in the Iban diet. The Ibans are most adapt at exploiting the rivers and streams along which they live, their techniques depending upon the conditions of the water, the habits of the fish and other aquatic life, and whether they intend to consume the catch personally or to sell it to members of their long-house or in the market. The introduction of fish-ponds has provided a much more dependable source of meat.

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244 Hunting provides a diversion from other activities, but game is not plentiful in this District. Gardening is assuming more importance among a number of Ibans, but the inclination is to plant cash crops rather than vegetables for personal consumption.

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437 The uncertainty of returns from rice cultivation, together with the orientation of Ibans to a cash economy and to goods which can be purchased with money, has prompted members of every longhouse to seek employment.

243 greater than those of hill-rice, yet each form has its peculiar diffi-
461 culties. Men and women who have spent days cultivating the soil (mito) complain of the intense pain through the chest and shoulders this work brings. Withstanding the elements, sun and rain (laban panas ujan) also
[464] elicits complaints. It should not be surprising, therefore, that many young people - and older ones, too - are disinclined to endure the rigors of farming, which offer relatively small if not uncertain rewards, and look for any opportunity to find other employment wherever it may be obtained.

B. Collecting and Fishing

222 Next to rice cultivation and wage-earning, the next most important
226 forms of Iban adaptation in this District are collecting and fishing. We have discussed the importance of rubber as one of the economic bases of Sibu, but when prices drop, tapping stops. Similarly, attention to pepper gardening varies with the market. Collecting and fishing, however, are generally universal and consistent activities through which the Ibans acquire foodstuffs and marketable goods.

Collecting

Iban adat provides that anyone may eat the fruit of another
222 [671] person's tree at the tree, but it is a violation subject to fine to re-
[432] move or take fruit away from the place. The various species of fruit are gathered in season and sometimes sold to Chinese vendors or, more frequently of late, sold by Iban collectors, either men or women, on the streets.

In addition to the continuous demand of the Ibans themselves for mats and baskets, the former for covering the floors when sitting, for containing the newly harvested rice and for threshing, the latter for containers for seed, harvested rice, fish and jungle produce, among other uses, they also are manufactured for sale in Sibu.[21]

Other jungle produce of commercial value includes a wide variety of vegetables. Ibans living in the Sungai Sunga and Sungai Assan area collect edible ferns each evening and bring the ferns (the most common are paku' and kemiding) bound in pineapple leaves (daun nanas) to market in the early morning. Kangkong, a leafy vegetable not unlike spinach, is plucked and sold regularly. Less regularly, Ibans bring in bamboo shoots (rubu') and the cabbages of several species of palms such as the sago (upa' mulong), upa' pantu', upa' maram, upa' apong, upa' lalis and upa' bindang.

Fishing

Exploitation of aquatic life provides the principal source of protein in the Iban diet. Fish, shrimps and snails are caught or trapped in the numerous streams. Various types of worms and slugs are obtained

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[21] The sale of mats and baskets affords an opportunity for Iban women to visit the Sibu pasar or, occasionally, to travel as far as Sarikei, where they rationalize the prices are better - and the cost of travel thrice that to Sibu! The availability of plastics is being exploited by Iban women who weave brightly colored baskets of plastic and sell them from door to door or to local shops.

226 by splitting open submerged logs from which they are removed. The presence of several species of fish depends upon conditions of the water, but other species are almost constantly present.

226 The most common fish are the ikan semah, tapah, empuran, keli', 825 baung, puyu, tilan, lajong, labang, and enseluai. During high tides and 227 flooding, Ibans stretch nets (pukat, v.f., mukat) across streams or suspend nets over a framework at a slope of 20° (nyelambau). In smaller streams fish-traps (bubu) are planted and fishing is done with pole and hook (nginti'). In larger waters, the cast-net (jala, v.f., nyala) is used. When streams are low, snails are collected from the banks, and when the water is high on the main rivers and at the mouths of their tributaries, shrimp are netted.

226 The near absence of fish in some hilly regions and some smaller streams has prompted Ibans to dig fishponds, varying in size from 1300 cubic feet to 22 acres. The ponds are stocked with fingerlings or fry purchased from Chinese traders or supplied by the Agriculture Department. [434] The harvest of a large pond earns a profit of several hundred dollars for the owner, who also has his own supply of fish.

C. Animal Husbandry

231 In this final section dealing with the Ibans' adaptation, we shall consider briefly the types and purposes of animals and fowl which they [262] keep. As a general rule, the livestock which is considered edible by them is kept either for ceremonial purposes or for marketing, and little of it is consumed in the daily fare of the Iban.